

IN THE SUPREME COURT OF THE
STATE OF FLORIDA

**INQUIRY CONCERNING A
JUDGE, NO. 08-373,
PETER A. BELL**

SC09-782

AMENDED FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATION OF DISCIPLINE

The Florida Judicial Qualifications Commission (the “JQC”) served a Notice of Investigation on Charlotte County Judge Peter A. Bell pursuant to Rule 6(b) of the Florida Judicial Qualification Commission Rules. This inquiry has culminated with the filing of the Notice of Formal Charges, and Stipulation that have been filed together with these Findings and Recommendation of Discipline.

The Investigative Panel of the Commission has now entered into a Stipulation with Judge Bell in which Judge Bell admits that his conduct, while well intentioned, resulted in the inappropriate incarceration of the victim of a domestic battery case. This conduct violated Canons 1, 2A, and 3B(1) and 3B(2) of the Code of Judicial Conduct, as set forth in the Stipulation submitted herewith.

Judge Bell has admitted the foregoing, accepts full responsibility, and acknowledges that such conduct should not have occurred. Judge Bell now recognizes that this understanding was incorrect and has undertaken steps to prevent their reoccurrence.

The Judicial Qualifications Commission has concluded that while the judge’s conduct was misguided, it was not ill intentioned. Accordingly, the Commission therefore finds and recommends that in the interests of justice, the

public welfare and sound juridical administration will be well served by a public reprimand of Judge Bell.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael L. Schneider
General Counsel
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I HEREBY CERTIFY that a true and correct copy of the foregoing has been furnished by U.S. Mail to LaTour Lafferty, Counsel for the Honorable Peter A. Bell, 501 E. Kennedy Blvd., Suite 1700, Tampa, FL 33602, and John R. Beranek, Esq., Counsel, Hearing Panel, Ausley & McMullen, P.O. Box 391, Tallahassee, FL 32302, this ____ day of May, 2009.

Michael L. Schneider
General Counsel